

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 HONG K 10132 270300Z

54

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FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1798

INFO USLO PEKING

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

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DIA

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L HONG KONG 10132

NOT RELEASABLE TO FOREIGN NATIONALS

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2

TAGS: PINT, MILI, CH

SUBJ: FEI I-MIN COMMENTS ON PEKING'S MILITARY ORGANIZATION

REF: HONG KONG 9604

1. RESPONDING TO A QUESTION ABOUT THE FUNCTIONING OF THE PARTY'S MILITARY COMMISSION (MC) IN SELECTING "MODEL" UNITS WHICH HAD BEEN IN THE MEDIA RECENTLY (REFTEL), HONG KONG TA KUNG PAO PUBLISHER AND NPC PRESIDUM MEMBER FEI I-MIN TOLD CONGEN OFFICERS THAT THE MILITARY STRUCTURE AS A LARGE AND COMPLICATED BODY WHICH WAS MUCH BIGGER THAN ANYONE BELIEVED. HE STATED HE KNEW LITTLE ABOUT THE MC'S DAILY OPERATIONS OR HOW THE "MODEL" SELECTION WAS CARRIED OUT BUT HE THEN PROCEEDED TO SKETCH HIS UNDERSTANDING OF THE COMMISSION'S OPERATIONS AND ITS RESPONSIBILITIES VIS-A-VIS OTHER MILITARY ORGANS.

2. FEI IDENTIFIED THE MC AS HAVING A SUPERVISORY ROLE OVER
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 HONG K 10132 270300Z

THE GENERAL STAFF, GENERAL POLITICAL DEPARTMENT, GENERAL

LOGISTICS DEPARTMENT, AND THE MILITARY REGION (MR) COMMANDS. HE STATED THAT THE COMMISSION'S MEMBERS WERE LIMITED AND HE HIMSELF WAS ONLY ABLE TO IDENTIFY THE MOST WELL-KNOWN MEMBERS; MAO AS THE COMMISSION CHAIRMAN, YEH CHIEN-YING ("FIRST" VICE CHAIRMAN), AND OTHER VICE CHAIRMAN LIU PO-CHENG AND HSU HSIANG-CHIEN. FEI IDENTIFIED YEH AS THE MOST ACTIVE IN ITS LEADERSHIP. HE STATED THAT HE "THOUGHT" NIEH JUNG-CHEN WAS A VICE CHAIRMAN AND THAT HE SUSPECTED TOP-RANKED DEPUTY CHIEF OF STAFF YANG CHEN-WU MIGHT ALSO BE ONE. FEI NOTED THAT SECOND-RANKED DEPUTY CHIEF CHANG TSAI-CHIEN WAS "PROBABLY" A MEMBER, BUT HE MADE NO MENTION OF PEKING MR CHIEF CHEN HSI-LIEN, WHO HAD BEEN A TEMPORARY STAND-IN FOR YEH CHIEN-YING EARLIER THIS YEAR AT THE DEFENSE MINISTRY.

3. FEI REMARKED HE HAD SEEN NO OFFICIAL DOCUMENT INDICATING THAT WANG HUNG-WEN WAS AN MC VICE CHAIRMAN. IN FACT, FEI DID NOT INDICATE OR EVEN IMPLY THAT OTHER THAN MILITARY MEN WERE MEMBERS OF THE MC. FEI DID NOTE THAT WANG WAS STILL THE FIRST POLITICAL COMMISSAR OF THE "SHANGHAI CHUN CHU" WHICH HE IDENTIFIED AS LARGER THAN AND DISTINCT FROM THE SHANGHAI GARRISON COMMAND. HE STATED THAT CHAN GHUN-CHIAO WAS STILL FIRST POLITICAL COMMISSAR OF THE NANKING MILITARY REGION.

4. FEI SAID THAT THE LEADERS OF THE MILITARY COMMISSION PROBABLY HAD SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES, SUGGESTING THAT ONE PERSON DEVOTED HIS TIME EXCLUSIVELY TO THE "ARMY" (HE STATED THIS TWICE), AND THAT SOMEONE PROBABLY TOOK CARE OF TRAINING MATTERS. HE NOTED THAT NIEH JUNG-CHEN HAS TRADITIONALLY BEEN CALLED ON TO HANDLE CHINA'S NUCLEAR EFFORT. FEI NOTED IN PASSING THAT FORMER CHIEF OF STAFF LO JUI-CHING HAD NOT BEEN SEEN FOR SOME TIME.

5. FEI THEN STATED THAT THE GENERAL STAFF OFFICE WAS DIVIDED INTO A NUMBER OF DEPARTMENTS--FIRST, SECOND, THIRD (WHICH HE THOUGHT PERHAPS WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR TRAINING) POLITICAL, AND AT ONE TIME CULTURAL (WEN YI PU)--BUT HE DID NOT INDICATE WHICH INDIVIDUAL IN THE DEPUTY CHIEF OF STAFF RANKS WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR WHICH DEPARTMENT. HE NOTED THAT THE CULTURAL AFFAIRS SECTION NOW FELL UNDER THE POLITICAL DEPARTMENT, AS DID THE MILITARY'S SCHOOLS WHICH INCLUDED AN ENGLISH LANGUAGE SCHOOL. RESPONDING TO A QUESTION, FEI AGREED THAT THE LARGE NUMBER OF

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 HONG K 10132 270300Z

DEPUTY DIRECTORS OF THE GENERAL LOGISTICS DEPARTMENT EACH HAD SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES. (IT HAS LONG BEEN SUSPECTED THAT INDIVIDUAL SERVICE BRANCHES AND WEAPONRY TYPES AS WELL AS TRADITIONAL LOGISTICS DIVISIONS WERE REPRESENTED AND SUPERVISED BY A SPECIFIC DEPUTY DIRECTOR.)

6. FEI THEN STATED THAT THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE WAS STRICTLY CONCERNED WITH DAY-TO-DAY ADMINISTRATION OF THE PLA AND THAT

THE MILITARY COMMISSION HAD NO CONNECTION WITH THE STATE
COUNCIL. AS A BODY THE MILITARY COMMISSION WAS ONLY SLIGHTLY
BELOW THE POLITBURO AND HIS DEFINITION OF ITS RELATIONSHIP
SUGGESTED THAT
IT WAS NOT IN ANY WAY DEPENDENT ON THE POLITBURO FOR LEADERSHIP
OR GUIDANCE. PRESUMABLY THE INTERLOCKING MEMBERSHIP OF THE TWO
BODIES PROVIDED THE REQUISITE ASSURANCE THAT THE TWO DID NOT
OPERATE AT CROSS PURPOSES.
CROSS

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